

How to Install CSDS on an M1 Macbook

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CSDS is written in a language that is compiled to Intel X86 machine instructions. CSDS also requires running Windows. But, M1 and M2 Macbooks use an “Apple Silicon” CPU that is not capable of running an X86 virtual machine (like Parallels, VMWare Fusion, etc.), and so Windows for Intel machines cannot be used on such Macbooks.

This document describes the steps needed to get CSDS running on an Apple Silicon MacBook, with only a little bit of effort and some time. These instructions should work for both M1 and M2 MacBooks, although I’ve only tested them on my M1 MacBook Air.

1. INSTALL PARALLELS

Buy and install a copy of Parallels Desktop for Mac (<https://www.parallels.com>). Current price as of 05/2023 is about \$100). There is also a free trial version that will run for 14 days, so you can try all the steps below before you buy.

2. INSTALL WINDOWS 11 FOR ARM

Use Parallels to install Windows 11 for ARM processors. Step by step instructions here: <https://kb.parallels.com/125375>.

NOTE: In this step we install the ARM version of Windows, which is technically unsupported, but it works fine. Built into Win11/ARM is an X86 emulator, that so far has run all X86 applications that I’ve tested with it.

NOTE: Do not try to install CSDS until step 3 below is complete.

3. INSTALL .NET 3.5

When the Win11/ARM installation is complete, and it is done booting, install the .NET framework 3.5 (includes .NET 2.0 and 3.0), by following the instructions here: <https://www.howtogeek.com/880208/how-to-enable-net-framework-2-0-and-3-5-in-windows-11>.

NOTE: In this step we are actually installing the Intel 86 version of .NET, which works fine in Win11/ARM, due to the X86 emulation capability. Do NOT try to download and install .NET 3.0 or any other version of .NET yourself (it has been reported that that approach does NOT work). Just let Windows do it.

The easiest way to get to the “Turn Windows features on or off” dialog box is to click in the “magnifying glass: Search” at the bottom center of the Windows screen, and type “Turn Windows”. Click on “Turn Windows features on or off/Control Panel”, and the control panel will be shown.

In the control panel, click the checkbox to the left of “.NET Framework 3.5 (includes .NET 2.0 and 3.0)”. It will turn to a dark blue box with a white minus sign.

Click OK. And when it asks, click on “Let Windows Update download the files for you”, as per the step-by-step instructions from the link above.

Wait until the .NET framework is fully installed.

Restart your Windows 11 for ARM virtual machine.

4. INSTALL CSDS

Once the virtual machine has rebooted, log in to Windows as usual. Then, install CSDS using the instructions that were emailed to you. If you can get to the dialog that asks for a key, you are running CSDS using .NET 3.5, and all is well.

DONE! You can now startup and use CSDS on your M1 or M2 MacBook.